CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing transparent compatibility and adaptation to differing format implementations in a computer system, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a first format, the first format compatible with a format for an application program;

providing a second format, the second format compatible with a format for an output device; and

transforming inputs from the application program from the first format to the second format for output on the output device to provide compatibility between the application program and the output device without substantially altering the application program.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein providing a first format comprises providing a first frame buffer of the first format.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein providing a second format comprises providing a second frame buffer of the second format.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the first format comprises a first resolution.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the first format comprises a first depth.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the first format comprises a first video standard.

7. The method of claim 4 wherein the second format comprises a second resolution.

8. The method of claim 5 wherein the second format comprises a second depth.

9. The method of claim 6 wherein the second format comprises a second video standard.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein providing a first format comprises providing a first aperture card.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein providing a second format comprises providing a second aperture card.

12. A system for improving compatibility between an application program and a display device of a computer system, the system comprising:

a CPU;

at least one real frame buffer coupled to the CPU and to the display device, the at least one real frame buffer having a first format compatible with the display device; and

at least one alternate frame buffer coupled to the at least one real frame buffer and the CPU, the at least one alternate frame buffer having a second format compatible with the application program, wherein the CPU controls transformations from the second format to the first format transparently to the application program.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein the first and second formats comprise first and second resolutions, first and second depths, and first and second video standards.

14. An apparatus for improving compatibility between an application program and a display device of a computer system, the apparatus comprising:

a first frame buffer means of a first format, the first frame buffer means compatible with and storing data from the application program;

a second frame buffer means of a second format, the second frame buffer means compatible with the display device; and

a transformation means between the first frame buffer means and the second frame buffer means for transforming data in the first format to data in the second format transparently to the application program.

15. The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising a CPU, the CPU coupled to and controlling the first and second buffer means and the transformation means.

16. The apparatus of claim 15 further comprising RAM, the RAM coupled to

the CPU and the first buffer means for receiving untransformed data from the first buffer means.

17. A computer readable medium containing program instructions for:

providing a first format, the first format compatible with a format for an application program;

providing a second format, the second format compatible with a format for an output device; and

transforming inputs from the application program from the first format to the second format for output on the output device to provide compatibility between the application program and the output device without substantially altering the application program.